

Government information on Polish foreign policy in 2006

*Mister President,
Mister Speaker,
Mister Prime Minister,
Members of the House,*

Every year at this time the Sejm holds a debate on Polish foreign policy. As you review the records of these debates over the years you can see both continuity, reflected in the fundamental goals in the international arena, and change – determined by the attainment of the objectives that we set forth in the early Nineties. Today, it is evident how much has changed with regard to Poland's security, development and position. We are not alone in guarding our security, since we have the support of our NATO allies. We have been given prospects of accelerated development through our membership of the European Union. The stature of Poland has been clearly enhanced by the membership of both these powerful structures of the Western world, as well as by our significant international activity, commensurate with Polish ambitions and potential.

Only several years ago our present attainments would have seemed elusive and improbable, as did Poles' erstwhile dreams of independence. And yet they have been transformed into reality. The upsurge of courage, initiative and resourcefulness, released by the great social movement of Solidarity gave enormous momentum to our actions aimed at resurrecting and rebuilding an independent and sovereign Poland. What is most important, however, is that this momentum in all areas of activity of the State and Nation has inculcated a truly Promethean spirit, inspiring people to confront greater challenges and consolidating determination to achieve their goals.

Naturally, the advancement was not all smooth. The process of transformations encountered resistance of the residues of post-communism, and there was no shortage of difficulties and pitfalls. We should remember how low was the point of our civilizational departure, how mediocre the economic condition of Poland in the late Eighties. When you consider all these modalities, when you compare them with transformations in other countries, the measure of progress becomes more apparent. It also becomes evident how far we have departed from the bad Polish tradition of negligence and inaction. The listing of Polish achievements and successes justifies the claim that a modern political culture is being formed in Poland, based on self-confidence and courage, which in turn are integrally linked to prudence and knowledge. Perhaps that is the reason why our Western partners increasingly refer to the assertiveness of Poles, our readiness to tackle tough problems, our skill and consistency in standing up for our interests.

It is only natural that the momentum of Polish transformations has been accompanied by a corresponding drive in Polish foreign policy. That momentum has prompted us to set ambitious goals in foreign policy and fulfill challenging tasks, so as to lend optimum support to the project of reconstruction and change. The effectiveness of the

transformations, in turn, enhanced the positive image of Poland in Europe and around the world, giving inspiration and flair to diplomatic work. You could say that Poland's success in internal policy became a crucial component of its international success.

*Mister Speaker
Members of the House,*

Present-day Poland is firmly anchored in NATO and the European Union. We are linked in a strategic partnership with the United States. Good neighborly relations bind us with all our neighbors. I wish to mention one more country at this point, at the beginning of my speech, namely Ukraine. The recent Polish-Ukrainian relations have become a special part of our history and our new consciousness. Considering our past, it would be hard to believe several years ago, that Poland might become such an important part of Europe's Eastern policy and that Poland would be a key supporter of Ukrainian democracy or Ukrainian rebirth. I think that our relations reflect, in a particular way, our place in Europe and in the world, as well as our international activity and a truly European, conciliatory identity.

Safe and confident, we must now undertake fundamental toil of matching our Western allies and partners in the economic and social spheres, of overcoming civilizational underdevelopment, resulting from the stagnation and chaos characteristic of socialist construction of the People's Republic of Poland. A development leap is both an ambitious and difficult task. Yet, as once Poland grasped independence, so it must grasp modernity. The time we have is short and determined by the rate of growth inside and outside the Union, by related international economic competition, including that in our region, as well as by advances in science and technology. These will define Poland's place in international division of labor and the resultant economic security of the country, which is essential for modernization and sustained growth of the Polish economy. That in turn will reflect on our position and potential to act effectively on the international scene in pursuit of Poland's interests. It will enable us to erase, once and for all, stereotypes of a coarse but cocky Poland, barefooted but in stirrups; a Poland that aspires to a role that surpasses its true capacity and potential, and which, in consequence, loses in confrontation with the powerful of this world.

If we are to make optimum use of the vast possibilities given by the European Union membership, we must elaborate a studied, analysis-based strategy for our actions in the Union. This is facilitated by the period of reflection inside the Union, which should address not only institutional change but also restitution of the Europeans' faith in the integration project. This period of reflection should be treated in Poland as an impulse for a broader debate on our EU strategy. In particular, we should ask ourselves what kind of a Union we want. And to answer that, we should determine what vision of the future Union is best attuned to our key goals in three main areas:

- first, accelerated development and civilizational advancement;
- second, the requirements of broadly perceived security, taking into account transatlantic dimension and the role of the United States;

- third, the consolidation of our position as a reliable member of the European community, capable of skillfully harmonizing own and community interests.

I would like to add that while considering the matter of the future of Europe, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs counts on cooperation with the Parliament. We hope to be able to debate this issue together with you, Honorable Members, and to work out a common denominator for our thinking about European Union and Poland's place in it.

Let me briefly focus on our present and future position in the European Union. The Union is a successful and – what's more – unique political project as regards the level of policy integration of the respective member states. You could say that European – and also transatlantic – integration has removed the curse of a centuries-long, essentially conflict-prone system of the balance of power in Europe, which caused the continent to be dominated by a concert of powers, at the expense of weaker and smaller states. That does not mean that in an integrated Europe the national interests of the member states have been subordinated to the rule of Brussels and have, in effect, disappeared. The Union states have divergent interests and their pursuit requires appropriate negotiating procedures. Concern for national interests must not, however, degenerate into a clash of national egoisms, contrary to community interests. Such egoisms sometimes make their presence known in the Union, especially on the part of the Union powers, and I consider them dangerous to our interests and would like to see safety measures to prevent the Union from being split up into exclusive subgroups, whose interests would overshadow those of the community. The Union as a whole should be an area of healthy competition – without which the Western civilization would be doomed to atrophy – and concomitantly of the inseparable, rational elaboration of the directions and principles of cooperation.

Poland's main contribution to such a Union can be our vigor, initiative, and ability to reach compromise and conclude alliances. This has been demonstrated by the success of the Polish delegation headed by Premier Kazimierz Marcinkiewicz during the European Council in December 2005. We clearly showed that in the process of decision-making, the Union must take the Polish point of view into account. And it is not about thinking in terms of “winners or losers”. Not at all. It is about having a substantial share in the common success. Attainment of such success will be easier if the rules of the process have a sturdy foundation. The matter should be resolved through an honest debate, conducted in a spirit of historic duty and responsibility for a Poland that is modern, strong and respected in Europe and around the world.

At the same time we should listen with utmost attention to the opinions of our Union partners concerning the Constitutional Treaty. They are quite divergent. Thus, we are dealing with an equation with many unknowns which requires a deeply premeditated reaction on our part.

Honorable Members,

This year we should define priority areas for cooperation within the Union and the instruments of its effective operation. An important place here is occupied by issues relating to energy security. We will seek a reassessment in perception of these

problems by our partners in the Union and in America, in order to elaborate – possibly within the whole Western system – a comprehensive strategy of energy security, and to involve Poland in its implementation. We will pay due attention to other looming problems that increasingly affect or could affect Poland: the problem of ageing of European societies, and the closely related question of recruiting foreign labor, particularly through migration from non-European countries, including Muslim ones. We are not losing sight of the implications of this phenomenon for relations within European societies, for cultural adaptation and social stability.

We will consistently affirm our position concerning the need for creating a single market in the Union through eradicating all barriers to implementation of the four freedoms, particularly the freedom of movement of persons and services. We are grateful to Great Britain, Sweden, and Ireland for not blocking access of Polish workers to their labor markets; we know that Poles employed there are working well and contribute to economic growth of those countries and of the Union as a whole. We expect that also other states open their labor markets to Polish citizens. We will become active in the discussion on the European Social Model. We feel that the principle of solidarity is the central element here. It recognizes the need for healthy competition and honest rivalry as the core values of Western civilization. They must not be allowed to degenerate, leading to social Darwinism, however. Similarly, the need for assistance and support – rooted in the principle of solidarity – should stimulate pro-active attitudes, rather than inducing indolence and advancement of claims. The other key factor affecting the Social Model is economic growth, which leads to the creation of new and – more importantly – “dignified” jobs, securing individual development and satisfaction for the citizens of the Union.

The invigoration of economic growth throughout the Union would be served by implementation of a modified Lisbon Strategy. In a globalized world the future will be claimed by those who effectively cope with the challenges of modern free-market competition and win thanks to their better knowledge and professionalism, innovation and creative attitudes. We will strive to upgrade the competitiveness of the Polish economy, becoming involved in research and development cooperation, including research projects financed by the Union. We expect that true to the principle of solidarity, Poland will obtain Union support for the development of its scientific research.

Naturally, Poland’s accelerated economic development will hinge on implementation of the decisions of last December’s European Council, which resulted in compromise over the budget for the years 2007-2013. We will seek a quickest possible conclusion of the work on the package of legislation concerning the New Economic Perspective, so that its actual implementation is possible from 1 January 2007.

Honorable Members,

The economic dimension of the Union is obviously of key importance. However, we would like to see the Union continue its evolution from a primarily economic project toward a comprehensive architecture of institutional, political, and social solutions, so that a solidary Union of Societies and Politicians gains strength alongside the Union

of Entrepreneurs and Bookkeepers. We attach particular significance to the efficient operation of the decision-making mechanism, which, so far – as demonstrated by the December summit – largely depended on the good political will and ability to compromise on the part of the major Union states. We believe, therefore, in the need of precisely such collaboration – based on good will and compromise – of the states that feel a particular responsibility for the Union, and for building its strong and efficient foundations and mechanisms.

An important test of the political will and potential for collaboration will come with the elaboration of the European Union's common foreign policy, equipped with suitable executive instruments. In particular – through appointment of the Union's foreign minister and creation of the EU External Action Service. The Common Foreign and Security policy is the emanation of Union's activity in this field. We will work for its consolidation and deepening. The East European direction is a promising area of development for the Union's foreign policy. It is high time for the Union's decisions and actions – and particularly those of the respective member states – to be based on solid foundations of deep and rationalized knowledge about Russia, Ukraine and other states of Eastern Europe. We are not only prepared to share such knowledge, but also to be actively involved in elaborating appropriate decisions. We know that such is the expectation of our Union partners. We are particularly pleased by the relevant initiatives of Germany.

Poland consistently supports the enlargement of the European Union. We feel that the Big Bang enlargement of 2004 invigorated the Union, rejuvenating it with new enterprise, creativity, and energy of the states and societies of Central and Eastern Europe. Admittedly, on occasion, it also aroused stereotypes, symbolized by “the Polish plumber”, that were unfriendly to Poland. However, the balance sheet of gains and losses clearly shows dominance of the former. If the Union wants to unite everything that has grown out of the spirit of European civilization and has identified with its values, it has to define the meaning of European identity and the extent of its political and civilizational borders. It must draw appropriate conclusions from this. We should see interdependence between the legal foundations of the Union and the possibility of its further expansion – something Poland supports unequivocally.

Our knowledge of the region suggests that the Union's borders should move further to the east and south-east, embracing Ukraine as well. In the Union debate on the subject, we will not limit ourselves merely to advocating our own point of view. We will strive to ensure that “enlargement fatigue” does not influence attitudes toward those states, leading to their exclusion in advance. We should be guided by strategic thinking and long-term perspectives. We will seek to ensure that the emerging Eastern Dimension of the Union's Neighborhood Policy draws the countries involved closer to the Union. At the same time, they should not be doomed to the role of “eternal partners”. At least some of them – the ones with a pro-European orientation and advanced internal transformations – should be given the prospect of membership, however distant it may be.

The system of the European Union's agreements and links with states and institutions in, practically, the entire world offers Poland a chance to utilize that system for promotion as well as political, economic, and cultural expansion far beyond our regional backyard. It is a profound challenge that puts us face to face with problems

and opportunities of globalization. In Iraq we have demonstrated that we can cope with such challenges – but we have to transform them into opportunities, including development opportunities, and not only in Iraq and the Broader Middle East, but also in other regions enjoying particularly rapid economic growth.

*Mister Speaker,
Members of the House,*

In order to ensure Poland's rapid economic growth, enabling us to narrow the development gap that separates us from the wealthy Western countries, we must not only make use of our membership of the European Union and other international economic organizations, such as the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development or the World Trade Organization. We must not only be more active in world markets, wherever niches for our exports and investments appear, and wherever investments – including advanced technologies – can be attracted to Poland. In addition to obtaining sound knowledge and elaborating hierarchy of priorities and goals in this area, we must prepare suitable instruments ensuring effective operation.

In this context I will invoke two concepts: economization of diplomatic activity and promotion. We should make the most of the “5 minutes” of world's attention we enjoyed in 1989, and have again received nowadays, after the EU accession. Europe and the rest of the world – notwithstanding elements of criticism – are again curious about Poland, our ideas regarding further development, and opinions on the problems of our neighbourhood and the continent as a whole. The current interest in Poland assumes a very concrete form, and may be translated into offers of economic co-operation, imports of our goods, common scientific and cultural projects as well as an increase in foreign investments and number of tourists visiting Poland. We must not miss this opportunity.

Knowledge about Poland around the world is still limited, and our image is often distorted and obscured by stereotypes. There is no need to explain how this affects attitudes and willingness to do business with Poles. Hence, we must reform governmental system of promotion and finalize work on the basic promotional message on Poland, which will be disseminated internationally. The message will be clear: Poland is a politically vigorous country with a robust economy, fascinating culture, a moving history and millions of young, dynamic well-educated and open-minded people. If such an image is attuned to the emerging civilizational advancement of Poland, our political successes and economic attainments, we will see a gradual disappearance of views about Poland – both new and historic – that are rooted in ignorance, falsehood or bad will. Whilst promoting Poland, we will adhere to the principles of maximum objectivity. However, should we encounter problems – such as lack of good will or misinformation, especially in describing painful elements of our history – we will resolutely defend Poland's good name.

In order to intensify promotional activity, particularly in the economic sphere, we will introduce appropriate changes and innovations. First of all, we will draft a comprehensive *Strategy for Promotion of Poland in the Years 2007-2013*, elaborating key goals and methods of promotion, including its preferred recipients. We will

establish a professional government agency for economic promotion, modeled on the best examples of such institutions in highly developed countries. Most importantly, we will transform and consolidate the so-called economic diplomacy, bind it with other segments of the foreign service, so that it is capable of strategic planning and implementation of our economic interests abroad.

Honorable Members,

While promoting Poland around the world we must not forget about Polish expatriates – the Polonia, and the Polish national minorities. To some extent we will be also promoting them – the Poles scattered across all continents. We are hoping that they will actively join in that promotional campaign, feeling justified pride in their Polish roots. We will encourage representatives of the Jewish diaspora, emotionally linked to Poland and remembering the land of their forefathers, to support our promotional message abroad.

We will ensure that persons belonging to all groups of Polish expatriates support economic aspects of our activity abroad, whether in the promotional or business sphere. We assume that this will constitute an important factor enhancing economization of Polish foreign policy.

At the same time we will consistently provide support for the Polonia and Polish minorities abroad, particularly in the cultivation of their Polish roots and language. We will resolutely defend their rights wherever they are violated due to undemocratic practices – as in Belarus.

It is important for the *Government Program of Cooperation with the Polonia and Poles Abroad* to be systematically upgraded and modified. In our opinion, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which deals with Polonia issues on a daily basis, should not only be the coordinator of the implementation of the *Government Program*, but also the main disposer of the state funds earmarked for the purpose. I would like to add one more remark. We are considering new methods of uniting Polonia. We have currently great numbers of young, well-educated Poles, working abroad. Large numbers of Polish intelligentsia. I believe it is crucial that they, this group of people functioning in the opinionmaking circles, come together, and that we work together with them.

*Mister Speaker,
Members of the House,*

In the present-day world we are confronted with non-traditional, often dramatic challenges. They necessitate appropriate adaptation of the regional and world organizations, such as the United Nations.

Poland will continue to be involved in the work on UN reform, particularly concerning the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission, the Human Rights

Council, reform of the Economic and Social Council, prevention of terrorism and elimination of the shortcomings in the regulations and mechanisms concerning disarmament and nonproliferation. We will strive to make the Security Council more effective and representative, also through allocation of an additional nonpermanent seat to the Eastern Europe regional group.

The aforementioned changes and other related actions should help reduce such negative global phenomena as the economic gap between the rich North and the poor South, the dishonest appropriation or waste of assistance resources by corrupt regimes that are usually undemocratic or even authoritarian. The vicious circle of poverty, misrule and frequent political oppression drives societies in the South into deep social and cultural frustration, and blind fury, which turns against the powerful of this world – the prosperous countries of the West, seen as patrons of those corrupt and repressive regimes. In that disorientation and anger, religion becomes a discernible point of reference, particularly in Muslim societies. Subjected to serious misinterpretations, it is transformed into ideological call for a global revenge against the world of “the rich and infidel”. However, we should remember that the proportion of the fundamentalist fanatics, particularly those who resort to armed terrorism, is low, and that their terrorist activity targets not only Westerners. “Local tyrants” rarely fall victim to terrorist attacks; more often they hit other Muslims who call for modernization and oppose authoritarianism, whether lay or exploiting religion. And most frequently, the victims are ordinary, innocent people. This is eloquently illustrated by Iraq. We are dealing there with a “hot” civil war between forces seeking modernity and normalcy, and forces pushing toward the darkness of traditionalism and seclusion. Many Muslim countries are experiencing the “cold” version of that war. It is the region of the Broader Middle East where all gravest dilemmas, challenges and threats of the modern world have become most intertwined.

Can those challenges and threats be effectively confronted by the United Nations, whose members also include states that are devoid of credibility, that are dictatorial and authoritarian, with regimes that condone fanaticism and terrorism, or states that are weak and “failed”? There is no simple response to this question. However, it must be assumed that the potential of the UN has not become exhausted, and that with a suitable reform of the whole structure it can be duly activated and utilized.

The states and institutions of the Euro-Atlantic zone attach top significance to the promotion of global democratization and modernization. In recent years, much has been said in Western states about preemptive and preventive military strikes as an effective way of averting terrorist attacks. It seems, however, that prevention can be made even more effective by addressing the core factors generating the non-traditional threats, including terrorism, and by eliminating or substantially curtailing them. This requires undertakings that are protracted and costly, but which ultimately are more effective than even the most brilliant military victories. Since the time of Kant it has been known that democratic societies, guided by a collective common sense, are more predictable and – even more importantly – more peaceful, than societies subjected to the oppressiveness of autocracy and authoritarianism. Let me repeat: we consider political and economic preventive actions to be the most effective and least risk-prone method of counteracting terrorism and other non-traditional threats. However, it does happen on occasion, as it is in Iraq, that a military *ultima ratio* becomes unavoidable.

Honorable Members,

Our centuries-long tradition of struggle for freedom and independence and, particularly, the experience gained in our successful transformation, constitute a kind of rich political know-how, which predestines Poland to concern itself with human rights, and the right to democracy and free market. This is also connected with the fulfillment of our obligations to provide development aid – something that will gain increasing prominence in our international activity. We will support efforts to attain sustainable development, reduce poverty and hunger and find new sources of financing aid for the least developed countries. We will continue to implement these actions through the UN, European Union, Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, to name just a few prominent organizations in this field. We will continue our activity in the framework of the Community of Democracies, founded six years ago at an international conference in Warsaw, considering it a significant instrument of support for the democratization initiatives undertaken within the framework of the UN and by major democratic states. We will actively implement the conclusions of the Third Summit of the Council of Europe, held last May in Warsaw, and become especially engaged in the work of the Forum on the Future of Democracy, established by a decision of the Summit. All in all, you could say that the above plans and actions have imparted upon us the role of an advocate of international solidarity, sensitive to the needs of countries in our immediate and more distant proximity, particularly those in which our actions may have actual impact on positive transformations. Poland is country that is open to others and we want the world to know it.

We recognize the strategic significance of the broadly-perceived region of the Middle East as the addressee of many Western initiatives – to mention the Union's Barcelona Process or the American initiative of a Broader Middle East, designed to stimulate modernization and democratization in the countries of the region. We are prepared to become involved in them. We wish to expand our participation in the stabilization mission in Iraq by providing training and counseling, particularly for the non-military personnel of the reborn civil service and self-government administration.

Eastern Europe remains a particularly important region where Poland supports systemic transformations, democratization and human rights. We note with satisfaction that the Polish example may serve as inspiration for the activity of the Ukrainian elite and society, disappointed by the model of transformations which are slow, and which either preserve certain attributes of post-Sovietism, or replicate certain bad solutions and degenerated practices, such as the oligarchic-clan system. We are deeply convinced that the return of authoritarianism in some states of Eastern Europe and Central Asia will not last in the face of the mounting democratization tendencies. With word and deed we will support the formation in those states of the civil society, aware of its inalienable rights.

*Mister Speaker,
Members of the House,*

The transatlantic community remains the cornerstone of our security. It is now being confronted by a new, non-traditional type of threats, rooted in a whole array of

phenomena characteristic of the South, and especially the Broader Middle East. I have already referred to them. It is a peculiarity of these threats that they are not generated, as during the Cold War, by an ideological “empire of evil”, with all its attributes of state and resources that can be calculated or estimated, and with an identifiable leadership, which – though faithful to the doctrine – was prepared to negotiate its position, guided by the basic, pragmatic desire to survive. But, is it possible to locate the fundamentalist Internationale of Terrorism on the map, to define its material and human potential, to identify all its leaders, and most of all – to come to terms with the terrorists, for whom life has little value? It is only with a limited certainty that we can point out certain communities, where the evil of terrorism is germinating, fed by blind hatred and deeply distorted religious dictates. We can name certain states, with despotic regimes and terrorist practices, or states torn apart by internal strife and in effect “failed”, which were the mainstay, or to some degree the incarnation, of that Internationale of Terrorism.

The haziness and secretiveness of these threats, which – when manifested in the form of terrorists attacks – cause casualties comparable in number to the effects of modern warfare, pose a dilemma when it comes to their effective suppression. I have already mentioned the array of political and economic measures that, if deployed in advance, can reduce and eliminate the conflict-inciting tensions and frustrations among societies of the South. However, the actions of terrorists can only be rebuffed by force. What instruments and institutions should then be used for this purpose?

Poland believes, as do many of our allies, that the North Atlantic Alliance should play the leading role. Terrorist threats have their clear military or guerrilla dimension, considering the methods of warfare and particularly their consequences. We, therefore, feel that NATO – while retaining its original attributes of a defensive alliance – should develop the capacities that can serve suppression of terrorism, its state and non-state backers. This requires an appropriate modification of the military doctrine, allowing for the operation of expeditionary forces of the Alliance beyond the treaty zone. Such changes are already under way, including the creation of the NATO Response Force and the implementation of the Prague Capabilities Commitment. In this context one should mention the allied training mission in Iraq and NATO’s engagement in Afghanistan, where in 2007 Poland will assume the command of the international security forces (ISAF).

Together with other allies we are moving to strengthen the political dimension of the North Atlantic Alliance, which should not only remain the institutional keystone of the Western civilization, but also a forum for the elaboration of key strategic decisions of the West. This would be enhanced by an invigoration of internal Alliance dialog and of the NATO-EU and US-EU contacts, complementing transatlantic cooperation. We will campaign for continuation of the Alliance’s “open doors” policy, also with relation to Ukraine. That country’s accession to NATO would not only strengthen the Alliance, but would fundamentally change the geopolitical situation in our neighborhood, greatly benefiting Poland, Ukraine and many other states.

We will support the process of elaboration of the European Policy of Security and Defense, so as to make it complimentary to the capabilities and resources of NATO. This applies, in particular, to the collaboration of NATO’s Response Force and the Union’s Battle Groups, and also the implementation of joint projects in the field of the

arms industry, research and high technologies. We will strive to make optimum use of the benefits of that cooperation and the work of the European Defense Agency.

We will actively contribute to the initiatives designed to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, such as the initiative unveiled by President George W. Bush during his 2004 visit to Krakow. I wish to pledge Poland's support for the efforts of our allies and partners, aimed at finding satisfactory resolution to the problem of the Iranian nuclear program. Furthermore, I wish to inform you that we are continuing talks concerning the possible participation of Poland in the American missile defense system.

*Mister President,
Mister Speaker,
Mister Prime Minister,
Members of the House,*

In today's world of global links and interactions, where an increasing role is played by multilateral relations and supra-national actors, the significance of traditional bilateral relations has somewhat diminished. Still, such relations remain prime foundation of international life. Taking up this issue I have chiefly in mind the fact that President Lech Kaczyński, during his New Year's meeting with the diplomatic corps in early January, dwelled at length on the subject of bilateral relations. Fully agreeing with the President's assessment of Poland's relations with the respective states, I would like to comment on certain questions concerning selected states with which Poland has maintained special relations.

First of all, I wish to declare that we will continue to tighten the strategic partnership with the United States, which constitutes a significant factor of our security and serves the consolidation of the transatlantic links. High- and top-level bilateral contacts are an important component of this partnership. We have to mention here the recent visit to the United States by President Lech Kaczyński, visits to Washington by members of the government, including myself, and the recent, latest round of the Polish-American Strategic Dialog. All these meetings have confirmed that we communicate and collaborate with our American partners as befits allies and friends. In addition to our excellent political and military cooperation, we would like to upgrade our economic cooperation and acquire American investments and high technologies. Energy cooperation is assuming particular importance. We will try to persuade world-renowned American research institutions to establish branches in Poland. We will consistently campaign for the lifting of the visa requirement for Poles traveling to the US.

We are closely following the political evolution of the united Germany. We believe that the deep democratic transformations in that country over the last half century have consolidated its role as the bulwark of democracy and a proponent of European and transatlantic integration. In fulfilling that role Germany can count on its tested friends, including Poland. We remember well the important and favorable signals from the new German leadership, indicating a broadening of the area of close cooperation between Poland and Germany. With that in mind, we will lend an even

more friendly and sincere character to both the contacts of representatives of the government and elite, and the relations between ordinary Poles and Germans. We have difficult history behind us and together we must struggle for a good future – for us and other nations of Europe.

France continues to evoke a reaction of affinity among Poles. This is an excellent basis for developing bilateral relations with that country, especially since we are receiving encouraging signals from the French side as well. The regular Polish-French summit meetings are an important factor enhancing better understanding and cooperation. I think that the possibilities lying in front of us were very well shown by the December summit in Brussels.

The well developing relations with Germany and France will be reflected in the tripartite cooperation, which has been known for 15 years as the Weimar Triangle. Broad possibilities of tripartite collaboration are offered by activity within the Union, particularly with regard to urgent Union problems, joint approach to the question of transatlantic relations and coordination of the policy addressed to our eastern neighbors.

As concerns the above and other issues, we are also open to tight cooperation with other Western states, particularly Great Britain, Spain and Italy, although in fact I should mention all the countries here.

As both a Central European and Baltic country, we feel predestined to play the role of a keystone in regional cooperation, also involving the Scandinavian sub-region. You could say that the focus on the East-West axis, so characteristic of Polish foreign policy, should be increasingly supplemented with new accents and greater attention to the North-South axis. This is confirmed by the experience of the Visegrad cooperation, which is 15 years old precisely today. It has passed the test of time and can still constitute a good platform for cooperation, e.g. on European Union issues or East European policy. Its effectiveness would be boosted if Baltic and Scandinavian partners joined in this cooperation on matters of common interest.

As concerns our relations with Russia, we particularly want them to be normal and partner-like, and to draw on the already tested spheres of cooperation, primarily the economic one. I wish to reciprocate the recent warm words of President Vladimir Putin and agree that Poland and Russia share a considerable potential of ethnic, historic and cultural closeness. We must activate it and use it to stimulate dialog at different levels and between different communities, particularly the political and opinion-making circles. It is in Poland's vital interest that a modern Russian state be formed to the east of the Polish borders, a state that does not seek inspiration in its imperial heritage, but builds a new identity of a credible and cooperative country, and especially – a good neighbor. We feel that there are no objective causes or reasons in our relations with Russia which could hinder good-neighborly cooperation based on rationally formulated national interests. We will strive, creatively and consistently, to achieve and consolidate such a state of affairs in our relations with Russia.

Inspired by the Orange Revolution, we will continue to support the fraternal Ukrainian nation in its difficult movement – marked by unexpected twists and turns – toward modernity and democracy. We note with satisfaction that Ukraine, with new

pro-Western elites resolutely defending Ukrainian national interests and an emerging civil society, is becoming a prominent actor on the European political scene. We expect that the country will cope with yet another great test of democracy, namely the forthcoming parliamentary elections. On our part, we will spare no effort to ensure that the strategic partnership between our countries is filled with new content, enhancing the transformations in Ukraine. This applies in particular to cooperation in the political and military area, further orienting that country to achieve high Western standards and, in consequence, to obtain membership of Western institutions, particularly NATO. This also refers to energy cooperation.

Our relations with Belarus will depend on the development of the internal situation in that country, and especially on the extent to which its clearly undemocratic regime continues to undermine human and civil rights. The forthcoming presidential elections will indicate how the situation is developing. We are hoping for victory by the civic-minded and democratic forces of Belarus. However, we are concerned that the elections will be conducted in accordance with Stalin's well-known adage that it is not who votes that matters, it is who counts the votes. If that were to be true, then it would be extremely difficult to restore full-fledged political relations between Poland and Belarus, particularly at the top level. At the same time, we will try to maintain pragmatically justified inter-ministry contacts as well as economic, cultural, legal and social cooperation. Most importantly, we will continue to support democratic and civic forces in Belarus, facilitating their access to information through the planned launching of a radio station broadcasting to that country.

I have already repeatedly referred to the growing significance of Poland's non-European engagement – both political and economic. Special opportunities here are offered in the Middle East, where we notice not only profound challenges but also trustworthy partners and friends, both in the Arab countries and Israel. We see similar opportunities in Asia. We will continue to maintain good contacts with many partners, such as Japan, the Republic of Korea and the ASEAN states. We highly value the role that the investors coming from those countries play in the process of modernizing Poland. We are closely following the emergence in Asia of two supra-regional powers: China and India, with which we intend to develop economic cooperation and political dialog. However, it is worth emphasizing that we will also test our strength elsewhere – for example in Latin America and Africa – where we see good prospects for mutually advantageous cooperation. Let me add, that it was perhaps somewhat reckless of us to miss the opportunities for political and economic cooperation with those countries where Poles had once been present in large numbers and active in supporting the local economies. I will not mention them all here, but this problem is on my mind and I would like to strengthen the cooperation especially with those states, where Polish experts were so very active.

Honorable Members,

I realize that I have not referred to many countries deserving friendly mention. I certainly was not guided by the well-known saying that a diplomat remembers what to forget. I focused on matters and issues rather than on respective states, keeping in

mind that the status of relations with this or that country in Polish foreign policy will be best revealed through joint resolution of these matters.

*Mister Speaker,
Members of the House,*

All the plans and undertakings, which I have presented, require appropriate staffing and organizational decisions. The ambitious plans of our activity within the European Union necessitate further consolidation and professionalization of the Polish foreign service, incorporating the hitherto separate segments of the administration concerned with Union issues. This will take place through the merger of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Office of the Committee of European Integration, resulting in a new character of the Ministry. The combining of foreign and union affairs in a single structure will allow greater effectiveness and improved coordination. It will also bring tangible savings due to the joining of institutions whose tasks have overlapped to some degree.

Another important area of foreign service reform will involve the establishment of a professional corps of economic diplomats, unambiguously subordinated to the foreign minister. At the same time, we will create an agency for promotion of exports and investments. It will lend support to Polish entrepreneurs, especially those debuting on new markets, and help to stimulate influx of foreign investments to Poland. We expect that an optimally effective and professional operation of the two segments in the economic aspects of Polish foreign policy will quickly produce tangible financial benefits for the state.

The aforementioned changes in the activity of the Polish diplomatic service will make it possible to rationalize a substantial part of state expenditures on foreign policy, thanks to a judicious reduction of administrative and maintenance structures – and the related costs, and also thanks to a richer array of instruments in diplomatic work. The MFA will present a project of rationalization of the network of Polish missions abroad, so that they ensure optimum implementation of the state's interests and appropriate presentation of the country's image. Still, justified savings should not imply unjustified restrictions and desistance. The peculiarity of diplomatic work is also determined by visible, though not excessive, attributes of prestige, such as the condition of diplomatic facilities, a suitable car pool, and finally diplomats' salaries. The stature of a country and its economic potential is judged on the basis of these attributes. I wish to state emphatically that Poland spends substantially less money on its diplomatic activity than most of our neighbors – new members of the European Union. The condition of many Polish diplomatic facilities is glaringly incompatible with elementary standards, not to mention their prestige function. The effective remuneration of members of the foreign service is far below the salaries of diplomats from the new member states of the Union. This causes tensions and undermines morale. I appeal for this state of affairs to be changed. Excessive savings on diplomacy turn out to be very costly in the final account.

We intend to energize the efforts to promote our politicians, diplomats, economists and other experts as candidates to senior posts – especially in the European Union, but

also within the UN system and global and regional organizations. This will give us influence, commensurate with our role and potential, on the decisions and undertakings of these institutions.

*Mister President,
Mister Speaker,
Mister Prime Minister,
Members of the House,*

Poland, from its very beginnings, has been part of the Western world. Today, it integrally belongs to the system of Western institutions, and in its daily practice endorses its values and spirit. Together with the whole West, together with the whole responsible international community, we confront new, often difficult and dangerous challenges. The way we cope with them will determine our security and our civilizational advancement, our position in Europe and in the world. They say that you should honor the past, and roll up your sleeves as you face the future. Polish diplomats are ready for the job.

Thank you for your attention.